



## Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut (JFACT)

February 24, 2022

For the last two years, the Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut, has received funding to provide Citizenship training. The funding is under the Community Services line item within the budget of the Department of Social Services. JFACT would respectfully request \$150,000, which is level with this current fiscal year. These services are needed because President Biden continues to increase the number of asylum seekers and refugees into the United States, including from Afghanistan. JFACT sends that money to several organizations across the state including;

- Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven
- IRIS
- Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants (CIRI)
- CURET
- Schoke Jewish Family Services of Fairfield County
- Jewish Family Services of Greenwich
- Jewish Family Services of Greater Hartford

Even though everyone wants to become US citizen, the entire process is rather intimidating for many. Our program provides an additional incentive, a final push for them to start the process. As a reference, the services provided with DSS funding provides comprehensive assistance for the entire process of becoming a U.S. Citizen, including;

- o Consultation
- o Fill out applications
- o Petition for waving of application fees (I-912)
- o Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions (N-648)
- o Translate and notarize documents (birth, death, marriage and certificates etc.)
- o Customized individual plan for each participant based upon his or her background.
- o Citizenship classes
- o ESL classes
- o Mocked interview
- o Review 100 questions as well as interviewing process prior to the test
- o Provide translation during the interview.
- o Provide transportation to the interview and return home when necessary

How about this story which explains the importance of these funds? G- N- N- is from Afghanistan, and he was an English interpreter attached to U.S. Armed Forces for almost eleven years. During his tenure in the Afghan theater, G's skill was much sought after, and he was appointed as interpreter for such high-profile figures as Sen. Joe Lieberman and for Sen. John McCain, among others. G fled Afghanistan in 2016 under a Special Immigrant Visa and became a U.S. permanent resident. Upon his eligibility for citizenship, IRIS assisted G with his application. When the time came, IRIS counsel prepared G- for his citizenship interview which was at 8:30am. However, at the appointed time, G was late, making counsel quite anxious that USCIS would cancel it, leading to unpredictable delays. When he did arrive, he apologized profusely. Apparently, he was awake until

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### Constituent Jewish Federations

Eastern Connecticut, Upper Fairfield, Greenwich, Greater Hartford, Greater New Haven, Greater Stamford-New Canaan-Darien, Western Connecticut



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3:30-4am assisting the U.S. Department of State with the extraction and transport of two children out of Kabul. G overcame his fatigue and passed his interview with flying colors to become a U.S. citizen.

Over the past year, the New Haven Jewish Federation held zooms with over 300 clients. Between Jewish Family Services of Greenwich and IRIS, Citizenship services were provided to 101 clients.

We respectfully request level funding because, as you can see, these services are needed. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Michael Bloom  
Executive Director